IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-16 (cancelled).

17 (currently amended): A method for manufacturing an integrated circuit comprising a nonvolatile memory, the method comprising:

C1

forming a first layer comprising a silicon surface, the first layer being to provide one or more floating gates for the nonvolatile memory;

nitriding the silicon surface of the first layer by remote plasma nitridation ~~and/or decoupled plasma nitridation~~ to incorporate nitrogen atoms into said surface;

forming a first dielectric at the nitrided surface, wherein forming the first dielectric comprises forming silicon oxide at the nitrided surface;

forming a conductive layer separated from the nitrided surface by the first dielectric, the conductive layer providing one or more control gates for the nonvolatile memory.

Claims 18-19 (cancelled).

20 (previously added): The method of Claim 17 wherein forming the silicon oxide at the nitrided surface comprises forming the silicon oxide by thermal oxidation.

21 (previously added): The method of Claim 17 wherein the silicon surface of the first layer is a polysilicon surface.

22 (previously added): The method of Claim 17 wherein forming the first dielectric comprises:

forming the first dielectric to have a silicon oxide surface; and

nitriding the silicon oxide surface of the first dielectric to incorporate nitrogen atoms into the silicon oxide surface.

23 (previously added): The method of Claim 22 wherein the nitriding of the silicon oxide surface comprises ion implantation of a material comprising nitrogen into the silicon oxide surface.

24 (previously added): The method of Claim 22 wherein the nitriding of the silicon oxide surface comprises generating a plasma comprising ions comprising nitrogen, and exposing the silicon oxide surface to the plasma.

C1 Cont.

25 (previously added): The method of Claim 22 wherein the nitriding of the silicon oxide surface comprises remote plasma nitridation.

26 (previously added): The method of Claim 22 wherein the nitriding of the silicon oxide surface comprises decoupled plasma nitridation.

27 (previously added): The method of Claim 22 wherein the nitriding of the silicon oxide surface results in forming at the silicon oxide surface a nitrided silicon oxide layer less than 3 nm thick.

28 (previously added): The method of Claim 17 wherein the nitriding of the silicon surface results in forming at the silicon surface a layer of nitrided silicon less than 3 nm thick.

29 (cancelled).

30 (new): A method for manufacturing an integrated circuit comprising a nonvolatile memory, the method comprising:

forming a first polysilicon layer to provide one or more floating gates for the nonvolatile memory;

nitriding a polysilicon surface of the first layer by remote plasma nitridation to incorporate nitrogen atoms into said surface;

after nitriding the polysilicon surface, forming a first dielectric at the nitrided surface, wherein forming the first dielectric comprises forming silicon oxide on the nitrided surface by thermal oxidation, the nitrogen atoms reducing the rate of growth of the silicon oxide on the nitrided surface;

forming a conductive layer separated from the nitrided surface by the first dielectric, the conductive layer providing one or more control gates for the nonvolatile memory.

31 (new): The method of Claim 30 wherein the integrated circuit is formed in a wafer held at a temperature of 300-500°C during the remote plasma nitridation.

32 (new): The method of Claim 30 wherein the first layer is patterned before the remote plasma nitridation.

Cl Concl'd

33 (new): The method of Claim 32 wherein the remote plasma nitridation is a blanket process.

34 (new): The method of Claim 32 wherein the remote plasma nitridation is performed with a mask blocking nitrogen from a region of the integrated circuit.

35 (new): The method of Claim 30 wherein the remote plasma nitridation is performed with a mask blocking nitrogen from a region of the integrated circuit, and the first layer is patterned after the remote plasma nitridation.